Amendments to the Claims:

1-5 (cancelled)

6 (currently amended): An interleaver comprising: a birefringent element assembly providing two output components which are generally orthogonal to each other; and a reflector configured to direct the two components from the birefringent element assembly back through the birefringent element assembly; ~~The interleaver as recited in claim 1,~~ wherein the phase delays and the angular orientations of birefringent elements of the birefringent element assembly are selected from the table:

Table III

First Stage Phase Delays	First Stage Orientations	Second Stage Phase Delays	Second Stage Orientations
$\Gamma + 2m_1\pi$, $2\Gamma + 2m_2\pi$, $2\Gamma + 2m_3\pi$	$\varphi_1, \varphi_2, \varphi_3$	$2\Gamma' + 2k_3\pi$, $2\Gamma' + 2k_2\pi$, $\Gamma' + 2k_1\pi$	$90°\pm\varphi_3, 90°\pm\varphi_2, 90°\pm\varphi_1$ (parallel component) $\pm\varphi_3, \pm\varphi_2, \pm\varphi_1$ (orthogonal component) where $\Gamma - \Gamma' = 2l\pi$
$\Gamma + 2m_1\pi$, $2\Gamma + 2m_2\pi$, $2\Gamma + 2m_3\pi$	$\varphi_1, \varphi_2, \varphi_3$	$2\Gamma' + 2k_3\pi$, $2\Gamma' + 2k_2\pi$, $\Gamma' + 2k_1\pi$	$90°\pm\varphi_3, 90°\pm\varphi_2, 90°\pm\varphi_1$ (parallel component) $\pm\varphi_3, \pm\varphi_2, \pm\varphi_1$ (orthogonal component) where $\Gamma - \Gamma' = (2l+1)\pi$
$2\Gamma + 2m_3\pi$, $2\Gamma + 2m_2\pi$, $\Gamma + 2m_1\pi$	$\varphi_3, \varphi_2, \varphi_1$	$\Gamma' + 2k_1\pi$, $2\Gamma' + 2k_2\pi$, $2\Gamma' + 2k_3\pi$	$90°\pm\varphi_1, 90°\pm\varphi_2, 90°\pm\varphi_3$ (parallel component) $\pm\varphi_1, \pm\varphi_2, \pm\varphi_3$ (orthogonal component) where $\Gamma - \Gamma' = 2l\pi$
$2\Gamma + 2m_3\pi$, $2\Gamma + 2m_2\pi$, $\Gamma + 2m_1\pi$	$\varphi_3, \varphi_2, \varphi_1$	$\Gamma' + 2k_1\pi$, $2\Gamma' + 2k_2\pi$, $2\Gamma' + 2k_3\pi$	$\pm\varphi_1, \pm\varphi_2, \pm\varphi_3$ (parallel component) $90°\pm\varphi_1, 90°\pm\varphi_2, 90°\pm\varphi_3$ (orthogonal component) where $\Gamma - \Gamma' = (2l+1)\pi$

Wherein m1, m2, m3, k1, k2, k3 and l are integers $(0, \pm1, \pm2, \ldots)$.

7-11 (cancelled)

12 (currently amended): The interleaver as recited in ~~claim 1~~ claim 6, wherein the birefringent element assembly comprises a first birefringent element having an angular orientation of φ_1, a second birefringent element having an angular orientation of φ_2 and a third birefringent element having an angular orientation of φ_3;

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wherein an order of the first birefringent element, second birefringent element, and third birefringent element is selected from the group consisting of:

first birefringent element, second birefringent element, third birefringent element;

third birefringent element, second birefringent element, first birefringent element; and

wherein the angular orientations are with respect to a polarization direction of light entering the birefringent element assembly.

13 (currently amended): The interleaver as recited in ~~claim 1~~ claim 6, wherein the birefringent element assembly comprises:

a first birefringent element having an angular orientation of 45° with respect to a polarization direction of light input to the birefringent element assembly and has a phase delay of Γ;

a second birefringent element has an angular orientation of -21° with respect to a polarization direction of light input to the birefringent element assembly and has a phase delay of 2Γ; and

a third birefringent element has an angular orientation of 7° with respect to a polarization direction of light input to the birefringent element assembly and has a phase delay of 2Γ.

14 (currently amended): <u>An interleaver comprising: a birefringent element assembly providing two output components which are generally orthogonal to each other; and a reflector configured to direct the two components from the birefringent element assembly back through the birefringent element assembly;</u>

~~The interleaver as recited in claim 1,~~ wherein the birefringent element assembly comprises two birefringent elements<u>; and</u>

<u>the angular orientations (φ_1 and φ_2) and the corresponding phase delays of the two birefringent elements are selected from the table:</u>

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Table III

First Stage Phase Delays	First Stage Orientations	Second Stage Phase Delays	Second Stage Orientations
$\Gamma + 2m_1\pi,$ $2\Gamma + 2m_2\pi,$ $2\Gamma + 2m_3\pi$	$\varphi_1, \varphi_2, \varphi_3$	$2\Gamma' + 2k_3\pi,$ $2\Gamma' + 2k_2\pi,$ $\Gamma' + 2k_1\pi$	$90°\pm\varphi_3, 90°\pm\varphi_2, 90°\pm\varphi_1$ (parallel component) $\pm\varphi_3, \pm\varphi_2, \pm\varphi_1$ (orthogonal component) where $\Gamma - \Gamma' = 2l\pi$
$\Gamma + 2m_1\pi,$ $2\Gamma + 2m_2\pi,$ $2\Gamma + 2m_3\pi$	$\varphi_1, \varphi_2, \varphi_3$	$2\Gamma' + 2k_3\pi,$ $2\Gamma' + 2k_2\pi,$ $\Gamma' + 2k_1\pi$	$90°\pm\varphi_3, 90°\pm\varphi_2, 90°\pm\varphi_1$ (parallel component) $\pm\varphi_3, \pm\varphi_2, \pm\varphi_1$ (orthogonal component) where $\Gamma - \Gamma' = (2l + 1)\pi$
$2\Gamma + 2m_3\pi,$ $2\Gamma + 2m_2\pi,$ $\Gamma + 2m_1\pi$	$\varphi_3, \varphi_2, \varphi_1$	$\Gamma' + 2k_1\pi,$ $2\Gamma' + 2k_2\pi,$ $2\Gamma' + 2k_3\pi$	$90°\pm\varphi_1, 90°\pm\varphi_2, 90°\pm\varphi_3$ (parallel component) $\pm\varphi_1, \pm\varphi_2, \pm\varphi_3$ (orthogonal component) where $\Gamma - \Gamma' = 2l\pi$
$2\Gamma + 2m_3\pi,$ $2\Gamma + 2m_2\pi,$ $\Gamma + 2m_1\pi$	$\varphi_3, \varphi_2, \varphi_1$	$\Gamma' + 2k_1\pi,$ $2\Gamma' + 2k_2\pi,$ $2\Gamma' + 2k_3\pi$	$\pm\varphi_1, \pm\varphi_2, \pm\varphi_3$ (parallel component) $90°\pm\varphi_1, 90°\pm\varphi_2, 90°\pm\varphi_3$ (orthogonal component) where $\Gamma - \Gamma' = (2l + 1)\pi$

Wherein m1, m2, m3, k1, k2, k3 and l are integers $(0, \pm 1, \pm 2, \ldots)$.

15 (currently amended): The interleaver as recited in ~~claim 1~~ claim 14, wherein the birefringent element assembly comprises:

a first birefringent element having an angular orientation of 45° with respect to a polarization direction of light input to the birefringent element assembly and has a phase delay of Γ; and

~~the~~ a second birefringent element has an angular orientation of -21° with respect to a polarization direction of light input to the birefringent element assembly and has a phase delay of 2Γ;

16-18 (cancelled)

Correction to Typos in Table III for Claim 6:

In the patent publication US 2003/0025998 A1 (Feb. 6, 2003), there are four typos for Table III under claim 6 and paragraph [0143]:

"100_1" (happened at two places) should be "φ_1" and "100_3"(happened at two places) should be "φ_3", respectively.

Table III in the specification paragraph [0129] is correct. Please help to make correction if this application is allowed to issue.